A REVIEW OF THE STATE OF THE ENGLISH NATION.

Tuesday, September 10, 1706.

I Had often determin'd to trouble these Papers no more with the Subject of Government, its Divine Original, Right, and Descent, having treated it in another Manner and Place; but Mr. *Rehearsal* having so earnestly, tho' calmly pres'd for an Answer to his last Scheme, I think, I cannot but give him a short——let him call it what he will—Answer, or Scheme, or any thing.

I thank him for calm reasoning, the only way I know to come at original Truth; I agree with him, the Scripture is to be regarded in this Dispute above all other Testimonies, and to burlesque or attempt to ridicule the Scripture, or the sacred Institutions of Heaven declar'd in it, is, what wise Men avoid, and Christians abhor——And hope, I need not disguise my self, as to any such Practice.

But I must ask him leave to differ in my Opinion, till I am otherwise convinc'd, and no Man ought to be offended at it—I will never oppose my Reasoning to Demonstration——But it must be obvious to my, tho', weak Sight, else 'tis no Demonstration to me.

I know, what Mr. *Lock*, *Sidney* and others have said on this Head, and I must confess, I never thought their Systems fully answer'd——But I am arguing by my own Light, not other Mens; and therefore my Notions may be new, yet I beg the favour to be heard, and if confuted, no Man shall be sooner silenc'd than I; if I cannot inform others by my Argument, I shall be inform'd my self by the Answers; so that some Good shall come of it, let it go which way it will——And on this Foot, I shall begin this

one Paper on the Subject, and not think it loſt to the World.

Priority of Dominion or of Property is the Debate, and the Aſſerters of the firſt bring the Scripture for Evidence, Gen. i. 26. *Where God gives Man the Dominion over all the Earth, &c.*—I ſhall trace no former Schemes here, but offer my own Thoughts, and leave it to any impartial Conſiderer.

TO ME, *Pardon me, Gentlemen, I impoſe upon no Man's Judgment*; But, TO ME, it ſeems plain; that neither in this Text nor in any other, is there the leaſt Power of Government, *ſuch as we are now treating of*, deputed to Man, and all that is meant here or in the 28*th Verſe*, amounts to no more than the very Gift of Property I have ſo long inſiſted on——And for this let me examine the Text.

Gen. i. 26. *And God ſaid, let us make Man——And let THEM have Dominion*; a meer deputed Right of Poſſeſſion given to Man, and to his whole Poſterity over the whole Creation——And the Deſcription of it explains the thing——*Let them have Dominion*, that muſt be *all of them*; over what? *Over the Fiſh of the Sea, the Fowl of the Air, and every living thing that moveth upon the Earth*—This is a full Deed of Conveyance of the general Form, the World, and every Freeholder to this Day conveys this full Dominion, as compleatly as is expreſs'd in the firſt Grant, when he either ſells, gives, grants or bequeaths to another; and I remember a Grant of an antient Mannor from the Crown of *England* runs thus——

I Richard *the King, grant and give to my Couſin* Thomas *of* Waſtling; then follows the brief Recital of the Lands, Caſtles, &c. *with Fowl and Flock, Hare and Brock, Salt and Stock*, &c.

In *Engliſh*, this is with full Dominion over the Fowl, Fiſh, and every living thing that moveth within the ſaid Mannor.

The Compariſon may be thought mean, but it ſuits the Caſe——And the next Words farther explain the Meaning of this Dominion, v. 27. *God had then created the Man, and bleſſing him, repeated the Grant*, v. 28. *Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the Earth, and ſubdue it*——What is this but a Grant of Property—And a Licenſe to his Poſterity to take Poſſeſſion of every part of it——For by Vertue of this Grant, it was lawful, and doubtleſs is ſtill, for any of *Adam*'s Poſterity to ſeize upon, and poſſeſs as his own, any part of the Creation of God, not inhabited or poſſeſs'd before—And Priority of Poſſeſſion is a juſt Right of Property, ſince every Man has in this Grant a full Dominion over all the reſt.

If the Grant gave a Right only to *Adam*, then could no Man legally poſſeſs any part of the World, but by a Deed of Gift or Sale from him, or ſome of his Poſterity; whereas 'tis plain, if I ſeize a Piece of Land never poſſeſs'd before, I hold of no body, but of God, and the 28*th*. Verſe of this Chapter is my Deed of Inheritance.

If then my prior poſſeſſing any part be my juſt Title againſt all other Poſſeſſors or Invaders, then muſt Property be antecedent to Dominion.

To go farther, I can find no Footſteps of any other Dominion, that ever God gave to *Adam* or to *Noah*, than of this over the vegetative and ſenſitive World; as to Dominion OVER ONE ANOTHER, *which is what we are upon*, it is not ſo much as mention'd or pointed at——All the real Dominion given to *Adam*, that I meet with, was over his Wife, and that was a part of the Curſe; for they were Equals before: had God deſign'd him any Imperial Authority, it could not have been ſo remarkably omitted.

Now, leſt this Dominion of Property ſhould be miſtaken for an Entail upon *Adam* and his eldeſt Branches only, 'tis ſaid, let us give THEM Dominion, and every Man in the World, in proportion to his Property, has equal Dominion by this Grant over the whole Creation to this day; If not, he that went to Sea to fiſh, might have his Fiſh taken away by any Man that next met him, for want of a Title to them ſuperiour to that of Poſſeſſion.

If I am aſk'd, when then was Government deputed, for that I own Government is of Divine Original; and was there a Time, when Man was without Government? I anſwer,

Govern-

Government is an Appendix of Nature, one of the first rational Dictates to Man from his Understanding; 'tis form'd in the Soul, and therefore of Divine Original; he would cease to be rational, when he ceased to live regularly; and if twenty Men born in the dark, and that had never known Men or things, were set on Shore in an Island, where they had no body to imitate, and nothing to do but to live; the first thing they would apply to by the Light of Nature after Food, would be to settle Government among them.

Government is Nature directing Man how to live——And how to live like a reasonable Creature—When *God* had given him the *Breath of Life*, and he *became a living Soul*, there was nothing left to do; 'twas as natural for him to establish Rules of living, as 'twas to the *Mother of Mankind*, when she had a Child born, *a Novelty strange enough at first*, to nurse it, and bring up—To have God say to Man—I give you the Power of governing one another, and making Laws, &c. had been a Tautology, and below his infinite Knowledge and Wisdom; he had given the Man a Soul—And he knew, that Reason would produce Government of Course, without any other Dictates.

Man therefore was not without Government—Even before he had any to govern, for he had the Quality infus'd with his Life.—But his Property must be prior to the Exercise, and regulating that Power; because that was given him immediately at his Creation, tho' it could not be put in Practice, till somebody was born to govern.

From the same reason came Patriarchal Monarchy, Nature dictating Obedience to the Parent of Mankind; the same Obedience in its proportion descending, and appearing in every Family to its Head.

And thus when the Sons of *Noah* and their Sons divided the Nations, the Patriarchal primogenial Monarchy, I agree, was establish'd; but I can no where see, that it was so by any particular Command or Grant from God Almighty; but as the meer Consequence of reasoning Nature, from Priority of Possession, Reverence of Parental Seniority, and such natural progressive Circumstances, as Time and an empty World offer'd.

Which Customs we soon find broken, when Families encreas'd, and Ambition introduc'd Conquest, War, Tyranny and Oppression——If my Scheme thus proposed does not please, I hope, Mr. *Rehearsal* will excuse me proposing it; I shall be very willing to be farther enlightned, if he will do it with the same Courtesie and Fairness, that I lay it down.

MISCELLANEA.

I Had not made publick the following Letter, if it had been the first Notice I have had of the barbarous Treatment, I recieve from a certain Person in this City; only for serving him, and concealing what he ought to blush at the Thoughts of having made publick; nor am I not provoked to expose him as he deserves, but have neither'd in this Answer to my own necessary Vindication; if he goes on with scandalous and forg'd Reflections, he must blame himself, not me; if he makes it absolutely necessary for me to tell his whole Story in my Defence.

SIR,

I Keep a Publick-House, and have Opportunity to hear, what one and another says of you. I heard one say the other Day, there was a certain Person that had done something, that deserv'd a reproof, and you went to him, and demanded twenty five pound, or else you would expose him; so was fain to compound with you. I was concern'd to hear it if true, but if false, it deserves to be vindicated. You may make what use of this you please; I do assure you, I always had a great respect for you, though unknown. I rest your Friend.

Aug. 27. T. S.

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